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A detector for detecting packet arrival time for packets received by a Home Phoneline Network Alliance (HPNA) receiver. The detector correlates received preamble symbols with stored preamble symbols and generates an estimation of the packet arrival time when the entire transmitted preamble has arrived at the receiver. The estimation of the packet arrival time is defined on a symbol period boundary. The detector includes a complex correlator with a simplified structure based on characteristics of the received HPNA signal.